(a) whether it is a fact that Canteen Coupons worth Rs. 14 lakhs were found in a cup board of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) if so, whether any enquiry has been conducted;

(c) if so, what are the findings of the Committee; and

(d) what action has been taken in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) to (d) The management of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant has reported that some unutilised coupons were found in one of its office almirahs in July, 1992. The management has constituted a fact finding committee to look into the matter so as to enable the management to take an appropriate action.

Vehicles in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

2941. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) the number of Cars and Jeeps which are owned by Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) the number of other rented vehicles which are engaged by the plant; and

(c) the details of the total amount spent towards rent during the last three years; year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) The number of Cars and Jeeps owned by Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is:

Cars	— 11
Jeeps	— 72

(b) The number of vehicles engaged by Visakhapatnam Steel Plant on rental basis, are as follows:

Taxi Cars	— 52
Taxi Jeeps	— 53
Buses	— 12
Autos	— 2
Ambulances	— 2

(c) The details of amount spent by Visakhapatnam Steel Plant towards rent during the last three years are as given below:

Financial Year	Amount in Rs.
1989-90	1,03,89,321.92
1990-91	90,78,847.41
1991-92	1,17,79,779.12

Shortage of Steel

2942. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Steel Ministry has reported an expected shortage of 1 Million tonnes of steel by the end of the Eighth Plan;

(b) if so, what steps Government are taking to meet this shortage;

(c) is there any proposal to expand the capacity of existing integrated Steel Plants to cope with the anticipated shortage; and

(d) what are the plans for expanding the capacity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Against the projected demand of 25 million tonnes of finished steel by the end of the Eighth Plan (1996-97), the domestic production is expected to be 24.09 million tonnes, leaving a gap of 0.91 million tonnes.

(b) In order to minimise the gap between projected demand and domestic production, Government have taken a

number of steps to increase the production of steel in the country and encourage private sector investment in the steel industry:

(i) Iron and Steel has been removed from the list of industries reserved for the public sector; it has also been exempted from the requirements of compulsory licensing under the Industries (Development and Regulation) Act, 1951, subject to certain locational restrictions;

(ii) Iron and Steel sector has been included in the list of high priority industries. Such industries have the facility for Automatic approval of foreign investment in equity upto 51% ;

(iii) Customs duty on the imported scrap, the main raw material for the secondary sector, has been reduced from 35% to 10%, steps have also been taken to increase the production of sponge iron which is a partial substitute for scrap;

(iv) Control over pricing and distribution of steel has been dispensed with;

(v) A set of 'Guidelines for Entrepreneurs in Iron and Steel Industry' were issued in October, 1992. The guidelines provide entrepreneurs comprehensive information on the policy framework, demand projections, availability of essential raw materials, infrastructural facilities, possible locations, technological capabilities existing within the country, requirement of environmental clearance for Iron and Steel projects, etc;

(vi) The public sector integrated steel plants have also taken up modernisation and expansion programmes.

(c) Modernisation and expansion of Indian Iron and Steel Company (IISCO) with private participation to around 1.5 million tonnes per year of crude steel capacity is under consideration. The Government had constituted a Committee of Experts (COE) to explore and make recommendation for Private sector participation. The report of the Committee is expected in January, 1993. The modernisation of Rourkela and Durgapur Steel Plants for increasing achievable capacity of crude steel by 1.2 million tonnes is under implementation. The modernisation of Bokaro Steel Plant for increasing the liquid steel capacity by 0.42 million tonne is under consideration.

(d) There is no plan for expanding the capacity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant.

Recruitment in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant

2943. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of STEEL be pleased to state:

(a) whether any guidelines have been formulated for recruitment by Visakhapatnam Steel Plant;

(b) whether it is a fact that the local people are being discriminated in the matter of recruitment;

(c) if so, the details of recruitment made during 1991-92 and 1992-93; and

(d) the number of people recruited to various engineering categories till date during 1992 indicating the percentage of locals?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF STEEL (SHRI SANTOSH MOHAN DEV): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) During the period from January to November, 1992, 118 Graduate Engineers and 303 Diploma Engineers were recruited in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant. The percentage of local people recruited in Visakhapatnam Steel Plant is not available as statistics based on regional